Admission of Transfer Students in British Columbia Post-Secondary Institutions: Policies, Practices and Capacity

Jim Soles
Consultant

July 2001

555 SEYMOUR STREET
SUITE 709
VANCOUVER, BC
V6B 3H6
CANADA

TEL: 604-412-7700
FAX: 604-683-0576

EMAIL: admin@bccat.bc.ca
WEB: www.bccat.bc.ca

BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL ON ADMISSIONS & TRANSFER
SUPPORTING BC's EDUCATION SYSTEM

A Report Commissioned by the
British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer

ADMISSION OF TRANSFER STUDENTS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS: Policies, Practices and Capacity

Prepared by Jim Soles, Consultant

July 2001

© Copyright 2001 by the
British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer
709 - 555 Seymour Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 3H6 Canada
Phone: (604) 412-7700
Fax: (604) 683-0576
E-Mail: admin@bccat.bc.ca

BCCAT is the official mark of the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer,
as published by the Registrar of Trade-marks of the Canadian Intellectual Property Office

This Report is also available in Adobe Acrobat Portable Document Format (pdf),
from BCCAT Online, the Internet service of the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer:
www.bccat.bc.ca

Photocopying and further distribution of this document is permitted.
Please credit source.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary 5

Introduction 8

Supply and Demand 9

A Provincial Perspective 13

Institutional Perspectives 19

Student Perspectives 22

Trends 23

System Capacity 28

Programs 30

Coordination 31

Conclusions and Recommendations 32

Appendix 1: Applications and Admissions 34

Appendix 2: Admission Targets, Cut-Off Points
and Admissions for New Entry Students: Arts and Science 36

Appendix 3: Policies on Admission of
Transfer Students to Degree Programs, by Institution 39

Appendix 4: Interview Questions 47

Bibliography 48

Acknowledgements and Author's Note 49

Executive Summary

The public post-secondary education system of British Columbia has grown rapidly in the past decade particularly in the number of degree granting institutions and the student spaces available in undergraduate degree programs. Despite the growth, demand from qualified students exceeds the supply of available spaces in degree programs. The resulting competition for available seats has created challenges for the students transferring from one institution to another. Within this context and in accordance with its mandate, the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer has initiated this review of the existing policies, practices and trends affecting student admissions with a focus on transfer students.

An analysis of Fall 2000 applications to universities demonstrates that the B.C. post-secondary education system does not have the capacity to provide access for all qualified students. The study, conducted by SFU, finds that only 86% of qualified secondary school or transfer applicants were provided offers of admission by UBC, SFU, UVic or UNBC. The universities treated secondary school and transfer applicants equally in this regard, but perhaps the more important point is that a total of 2,226 qualified students were required to pursue other options because of limited capacity.

The British Columbia post-secondary system shows a strong sense of commitment to transfer. From a system perspective, the Ministry has established a policy context that supports effective transfer and the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer has played a positive coordinating role. However, there are inconsistencies in the funding approaches to the different categories of degree-granting institutions. It would appear that the Ministry's current funding approach is constraining the ability of university colleges to become more significant receiving institutions.

The post-secondary institutions play the key role in ensuring that transfer works well in British Columbia and their policies and practices appear to be equitable and supportive of transfer. Eighty-six percent of students surveyed in the *2000 B.C. College and Institute Student Outcomes Survey* who expected to receive transfer credit were satisfied that their expectations were met when they transferred to another B.C. post-secondary institution.

The British Columbia post-secondary education system has undergone profound changes since the *Access for All* strategy was initiated in 1989. The primary goal of that initiative was to expand the degree-granting capacity of British Columbia and the results have been significant. Table 2 (p. 22) provides a description of the provincial changes in degree-granting capacity from 1989 to 1999.

The extraordinary growth in degree-granting capacity has also changed the geography of access in British Columbia. In the early 1990s, Simon Fraser University and the University of Victoria were the primary destinations for transfer students both in terms of absolute numbers and percentage of new entrants. Both universities continue to play a significant and important role as receiving institutions, but transfer students comprise a smaller proportion of their new entrants by the late 1990s. This change in transfer patterns may in part be the result of the creation of UNBC and the university colleges and the significant number of students who are now completing their degrees at these institutions.

In a decade with a significant degree of change, students have moved through the system efficiently to obtain degrees and they report high levels of satisfaction with transfer overall. The perspective from

post-secondary administrators is also positive with many institutional representatives noting that there is a high level of cooperation among the institutions expressing strong support for the B.C. Council of Admissions and Transfer. Given the complexities of thousands of transfer students each year, twenty-eight autonomous institutions (many of them new or with new mandates) and the significant changes in the 1990s, it appears that the B.C. transfer system works remarkably well.

However, as we look towards the future, it is clear that British Columbia still has relatively small degree-granting capacity and will face heavy student demand for the next decade. While the transfer system does appear to be effective, there is a nagging feeling that perhaps good fortune has played an important part in that effectiveness. After all, the number of student spaces has grown dramatically in the past decade allowing institutions some degree of flexibility to manage admissions and transfer. If the system does not continue to grow to meet demand, B.C. public post-secondary institutions may begin to see more significant issues arise with respect to transfer. There are, of course, many excellent economic and social reasons to expand the number of spaces in the system, but continued growth may also be important to help maintain the enviable record of our transfer system.

The following recommendations, therefore, are not urgent calls for remedial action, but rather suggestions to make a good system better.

1. INFORMATION:

The B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer commissioned a number of reports that have vastly increased the collective knowledge on transfer in British Columbia. Further information is particularly required on admissions and student transfer to the university colleges, Royal Roads University, the Technical University, the B.C. Open University, Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, and the B.C. Institute of Technology. The assigning of Personal Education Numbers (PEN) to all students in the B.C. public post-secondary system will provide a rich new source of data for admissions and transfer research that will be useful for both institutional and system-wide planning.

2. UNMET DEMAND:

B.C. does not have system-wide information on what happens to students who apply to transfer to university and do not receive an offer of admission. BCCAT should initiate a follow-up study on these applicants to determine whether there is a problem with unmet demand for transfer students and, if so, to propose recommendations for addressing the issue.

3. COORDINATION AND PLANNING:

Transfer among the post-secondary institutions of British Columbia has worked well primarily because of the cooperation of the institutions and the positive role of BCCAT. However, it is clear that institutions sometimes make changes to admission requirements or enrolment plans that affect other institutions without sharing this information in a timely manner. BCCAT should consider convening an annual meeting that would provide a brief update from each institution of changes in admission requirements and enrolment projections or plans. The purpose of the meeting would not be to debate the proposed changes, but rather to share information that could improve the coordination and planning for transfer.

4. CONSISTENT FUNDING APPROACHES:

The different provincial funding approaches to the universities and other degree-granting institutions reflect the post-secondary system of 1989 rather than 2001. The Ministry should initiate an independent analysis to assess the impact of the distinctive approaches and make appropriate revisions to the funding mechanisms.

5. UNIQUE DEGREE PROGRAMS:

The priorities of government, changes in technology and the economy and the influx of new degree-granting institutions have created a wide variety of unique and/or applied degree programs in British Columbia. The B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer should also undertake a study of the new unique and applied degree programs that have been initiated in British Columbia since 1995 to examine if students can transfer into or out of these specialized programs effectively.

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to study the admission of transfer students into baccalaureate degree programs by reviewing the policies, practices and capacity of the British Columbia post-secondary education system. A number of previous studies note the sophistication of transfer arrangements in British Columbia and the history of cooperation among institutions that goes back to the inception of the community colleges in the mid 1960s. This study focuses on the 1990s and the challenges that have arisen from a dramatic growth in the number of degree granting institutions and the student spaces available in undergraduate degree programs.

In August of 1988, *The Provincial Access Committee Report* was submitted to the provincial government, and it set the stage for the change that would occur in the 1990s. The province responded in early 1989 with the *Access for All* strategy that created the first three university colleges in the Cariboo, Okanagan and Malaspina regions and established the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT). This strategy also set in place the processes that would lead directly to the creation of the University of Northern British Columbia and two additional university colleges at Fraser Valley and Kwantlen. The creation of the Technical University of British Columbia and degree granting status for the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design and the British Columbia Institute of Technology were also foreshadowed in the Access strategy. Royal Roads University was established in 1995 as a result of the Federal Government's decision to close Royal Roads Military College.

The increased emphasis on access resulted in British Columbia's post-secondary education system growing from about 94,000 FTE spaces in 1989 to 138,000 student spaces by 1999. The growth rate of 47% during these ten years was significantly higher than the trends in other provinces. Despite the rapid growth, there is clear evidence that demand from qualified students exceeded the supply of available spaces in many degree programs for much of the last decade. The intense student competition to access available seats has naturally created challenges for most institutions and the system as a whole.

Within this context and in accordance with its mandate, BCCAT has initiated this review of the existing policies, practices and trends affecting student admissions with a focus on transfer students. From a system-wide perspective, it examines various categories of qualified students, and assesses the issue of spaces for B.C. transfer students. The study also seeks to provide additional system-wide information on admissions into degree programs for students (again with a focus on transfer students) that will assist the post-secondary education system and each institution with planning and policy decisions.

Supply and Demand

While it seems clear that demand exceeds supply, particularly for certain programs, there is insufficient system-wide quantitative information on student demand and supply. BCCAT has contracted with the Office of Analytical Studies at Simon Fraser University to gather specific information on the demand for and supply of transfer spaces at B.C.'s four largest universities. The following questions have been addressed for transfer students:

1. How many students (i.e. unduplicated headcount) apply to transfer from B.C. colleges, university colleges, institutes, or universities to UBC, SFU, UVic and UNBC?

2. How many of these students qualify for general admission to the university?

3. How many of these students receive an offer of admission?

4. How many of these students register at university?

5. How do the patterns for transfer applicants compare with those for direct entry secondary school applicants?

Simon Fraser University has previously collected comparable information on students entering directly from high school. Table 1 provides a snapshot comparison of the admissions data for transfer students and students entering directly from high school.

Table 1:
2000 Admissions of Secondary School Students and Transfer Students

2000 APPLICATIONS	SECONDARY SCHOOL	TRANSFER STUDENTS
Applications (unduplicated headcount)	13,439	6,804
Qualified Applicants[1]	11,141	5,334
Offers of Admission	9,653	4,596
Registered at University	7,144	3,749

1 An applicant is considered qualified for general admission if the university's published calendar minimum requirements are met. The minimum requirements published in calendars have remained the same for many years and have been lower than the actual grade point averages required for the student to receive an offer of admission.

Figure 1 puts the data from Table 1 into graphic form to emphasize that the demand in absolute numbers for university places from secondary school students is about twice the demand from transfer students. Figure 2 provides a percentage-based comparison of those applicants to illustrate that the two groups are very similar in the proportion of students who are qualified, receive offers and ultimately register for university.

Figure 1: Demand and Supply for Fall 2000 Admissions to UBC, SFU, UVic and UNBC

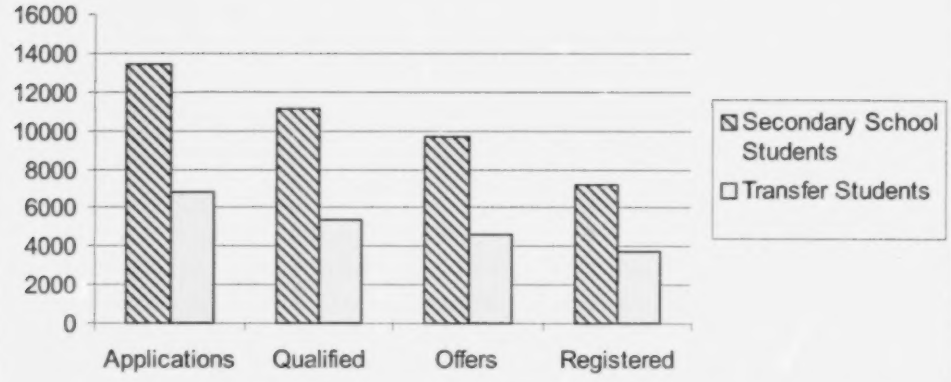
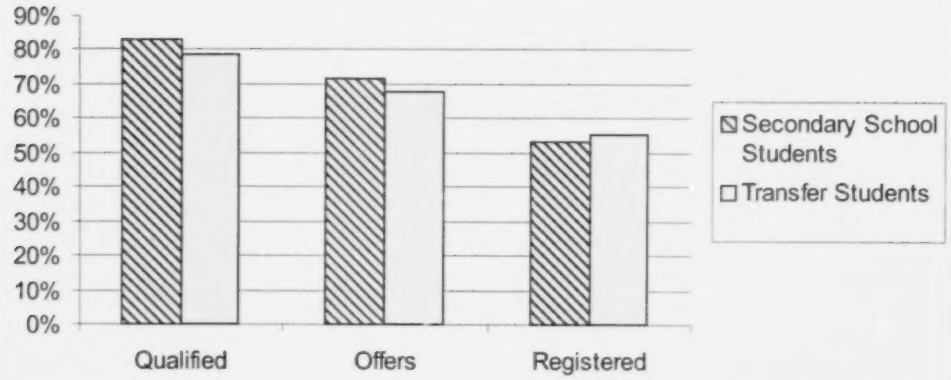


Figure 2: Percentage Comparison of Fall 2000 Admissions to UBC, SFU, UVic and UNBC



Of those applicants who met the qualification requirements, 86.6% of the secondary school students and 86.2% of the college transfer students received an offer of admission from at least one of the four universities examined in this study. In the fall of 2000, at least, there appears to be equal treatment of qualified applicants regardless of whether they applied directly from secondary school or as a transfer student.

Appendix 1 provides additional information on the trends for applications and admissions from secondary school from 1995 to 2000. It illustrates that the percentage of qualified applicants from secondary school who receive offers of admission has been quite consistent over the past three years, but was as high as 92.0% in 1997. From 1995 to 2000, the number of applications from secondary school increased by 26.3%, but the number of actual registrations increased by only 11.7%.

The percentage of applicants who met the general admissions standards was slightly higher for the secondary school applicants (82.9%), than it was for the transfer students, (78.4%). Those general admissions standards change slightly from year to year and appear to be comparable for both groups. Appendix 2 provides the admission cut-off points for secondary school and transfer student applicants from 1993 to 2000, and, where direct comparisons are possible, the admissions standards are the same or slightly lower for transfer applicants.

Transfer students appear to have a stronger sense of direction with respect to their applications. For example, they were less likely to submit multiple applications, an average of 1.24 applications per student versus an average of 1.71 applications for secondary school students. Also, once they received an offer of admission, 81.6% of transfer applicants actually registered at a university versus 74.0% of the secondary school applicants.[2]

It is, of course, equally important to collect comparable information for all other degree granting institutions, but for this initial assessment of supply and demand it was unclear whether other degree-granting institutions have gathered similar data. Therefore, during the course of this study, the university colleges, BCIT, Emily Carr and Tech BC were asked if their registration systems can easily identify and report incoming students by various admission categories such as direct entry or transfer.

The general answer to this question is yes, but while some institutions were confident that such information was readily accessible others were more cautious about the accessibility of the relevant data. Certainly, the institutions could sort applications by categories, such as direct entry or transfer, and had either regular or ad hoc reports that contained this information. The next step of examining and comparing these categories on the basis of qualified applicants, offers of admission and registration appears possible and several of the institutions are already conducting this analysis for their own planning.

British Columbia post-secondary institutions collect an impressive array of information about their operations for their own institutional planning and for the Ministry of Advanced Education or agencies for system planning. Additional requests to gather information must be considered cautiously within the context of what the institutions already provide and what value the new information might provide.

---

2 Comparison of BC 12 vs. *Applicants, Analysis of Applications, Admissions and Registrations of BC College Transfer Applicants to B.C. Universities Fall, 2000.* Appendix 1 provides further information from this report.

There are two primary reasons why the collection of data on admissions from Grade 12 and from transfers should be extended to all degree-granting institutions:

1. The data from UBC, SFU, UVic and UNBC provides an important provincial perspective on admissions and transfer, but including data from the university colleges, BCIT, Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, Royal Roads University, Technical University of BC and the B.C. Open University will provide a more comprehensive and accurate picture of a rapidly changing system; and

2. The *Budget Accountability and Transparency Act* requires the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology to table a performance plan in the legislature by April 30th each year and measures on equitable access and degree completion will likely be included in those plans.

The data must be collected in a consistent manner for all of the degree-granting institutions using the methodology taken by the Office of Analytical Studies at Simon Fraser to ensure that results are comparable over time. It may be too ambitious to include all degree-granting institutions in the survey for the Fall of 2001, but a system-wide survey should be conducted no later than the Fall of 2002.

A Provincial Perspective

Identifying the admissions trends for UBC, SFU, UVic and UNBC provides a helpful perspective, but a study of access for transfer students involves all post-secondary institutions and is obviously more complex than simply analyzing the numbers. BCCAT has previously commissioned studies reviewing public policies and practices with respect to transfer in British Columbia and this study is intended to build on those excellent foundations rather than replicate their analysis and conclusions. In particular, the studies by Andres and Dawson[3], and by Dennison[4], provide current and comprehensive examinations of the area.

There is no question that the Province of British Columbia encourages an effective and efficient transfer system. British Columbia's system was designed to facilitate transfer from the initial expansion of institutions in the 1960s. The creation of the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer was another strong indication that the province fully supports a system-wide approach that makes it easy for students to transfer between B.C.'s public institutions. In addition, the Degree Program Review Committee established by the Ministry requires all proposals to address transferability into and out of programs as part of the approval process for new degrees. Nevertheless, it important to consider whether the Government of British Columbia has policies or practices that affect access for transfer students either intentionally or unintentionally.

A. LEGISLATION

Legislation is the cornerstone for government's public policy and the various Acts governing post-secondary education in British Columbia set a context for admissions.

The *University Act* covering UBC, SFU and UVic provides clear policy direction in Section 48 by stating that the Minister shall not interfere with "the establishment of standards for admission". This section also appears in the legislation for the University of Northern British Columbia, Royal Roads University and the Technical University of British Columbia. The legislated authority to set admission standards rests with the Senate for the first four universities established in B.C. and the President has that authority for Royal Roads and the Technical University. Although there are occasional requests from the public to interfere in admission decisions, the practice of the provincial government has been to respect the autonomy of the universities with respect to decisions on admissions.

The *College and Institute Act* establishes the parameters for colleges, university colleges and, except for BCIT, the institutes. The Minister does have discretionary powers under section 2 of the Act that allow an opportunity to influence admissions policy, but in practice these powers have not been used. Instead, the Education Council has the authority to make recommendations with respect to admissions and the Board makes decisions based on those recommendations. The Institute of Technology Act sets a similar internal

3 Andres, L. and Dawson, J. (1998). *Investigating Transfer Project Phase III: A History of Transfer Policy and Practice in British Columbia*. Research report prepared for the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer.

4 Dennison, J. (2000). *Student Access and Mobility Within the British Columbia Post-Secondary System: A Critical Analysis of Research, Public Policy and the Role of the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer*. Research report prepared for the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer.

process for BCIT with respect to the roles of Education Council and Board, but the Act does not grant any discretionary power to the Minister with respect to admissions.

The *Open Learning Agency Act* does not specifically address admissions, but the Act provides broad educational authority to the Board and the Planning Council. The Open Learning Agency Act also states that the Agency will provide an educational credit bank for students, now called the Canadian Learning Bank, to allow individuals to receive recognition and credit for studies they have completed elsewhere.

From a legislative perspective, therefore, British Columbia's twenty-eight public post-secondary institutions have significant autonomy to establish and manage admissions. The legislation does not address transfer specifically, but transfer is a subset of admissions. The institutions that receive the most transfer students are under the University Act and, therefore, have the most autonomy from government. While the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer plays an important coordination role, the effectiveness of the transfer system is dependent to a great extent on the trust, goodwill, commitment and cooperation of all the universities, colleges, university colleges and institutes. The relative success that the B.C. system has enjoyed to date with respect to transfer suggests that the policy context built on goodwill and cooperation, with coordination from BCCAT, is effective for the province.

B. FUNDING

While legislation sets the broad policy context for government, the best indicator of the Ministry's practices with respect to post-secondary education is often found with the allocation of funds. More than 90% of the funding that is allocated by the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology to universities, colleges, university colleges and institutes in British Columbia is provided on the basis of FTE (Full Time Equivalent) student spaces. Allocation of grants in accordance with FTE spaces, or a similar unit of measure, is commonplace in Canadian provinces and has existed in British Columbia since the early 1980s. The *Access for All* strategy raised the profile of FTE funding significantly by setting out, for the first time in British Columbia, a plan for FTE targets — 15,000 new FTE spaces over six years. All of these new spaces were targeted for degree programs with 13,200 spaces designated for undergraduate programs and 1,800 spaces designated for graduate programs. In addition to the 15,000 FTE spaces allocated to degree programs, there were new FTE spaces allocated to adult basic education, career technical and vocational programs at colleges, university colleges and institutes.

The increased emphasis on quantifiable targets quickly became an attractive budgeting and accountability tool for the Ministry of Finance to use with the Ministry of Advanced Education, and for that Ministry to use with post-secondary institutions in general. The Ministry's practice of allocating most funds through FTE spaces may well be the most effective means available and it is not the focus of this study. However, it is clear that an FTE based funding allocation has a profound effect on post-secondary accessibility for all categories of students.

Almost every institutional representative interviewed during the course of this study began by noting that the FTE enrolment targets set by the Ministry are a key variable that guides how many students are admitted to the institution. Many institutions have established enrolment management models to assist their planning with respect to the enrolment targets. These models appear to vary greatly among the institutions in complexity, but essentially they all examine indicators of student demand and historical enrolment patterns within the institution. The projected enrolment numbers are compared to the FTE

targets set by the Ministry and the institution adjusts it admissions practices in accordance with these targets and its own priorities.

In addition, several representatives noted that the Ministry affects admission practices by targeting new FTE spaces to specific programs. The new FTE spaces for colleges, university colleges and institutes are all targeted to specific programs, some of which are the institution's priorities and others reflecting government priorities. Again, there is a less directive approach with the university sector on new FTE spaces, but the Ministry has in recent years targeted a proportion of new university spaces to high priority areas such as nursing or computer science.

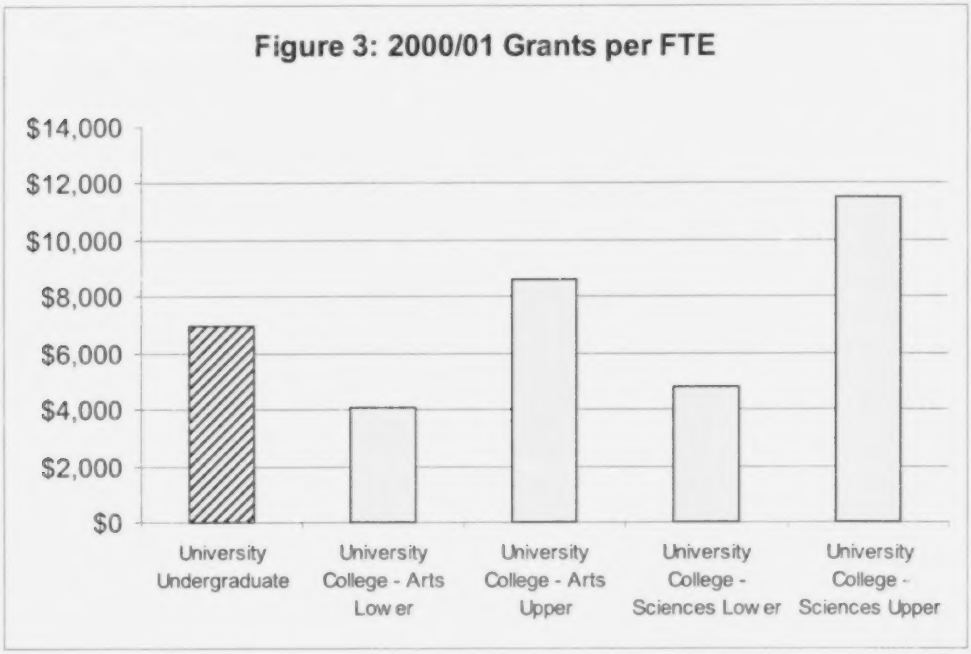
Since the admissions practices of post-secondary institutions are directly related to the FTE targets and the funds that are allocated to meet those targets, it is appropriate to note that the province takes quite different funding approaches to the different groups of degree-granting institutions in the province. The point here is not to comment on the adequacy of FTE funding or suggest that one group of degree-granting institutions is funded better than the other, but rather to consider the impact on admissions of differing approaches to FTE funding.

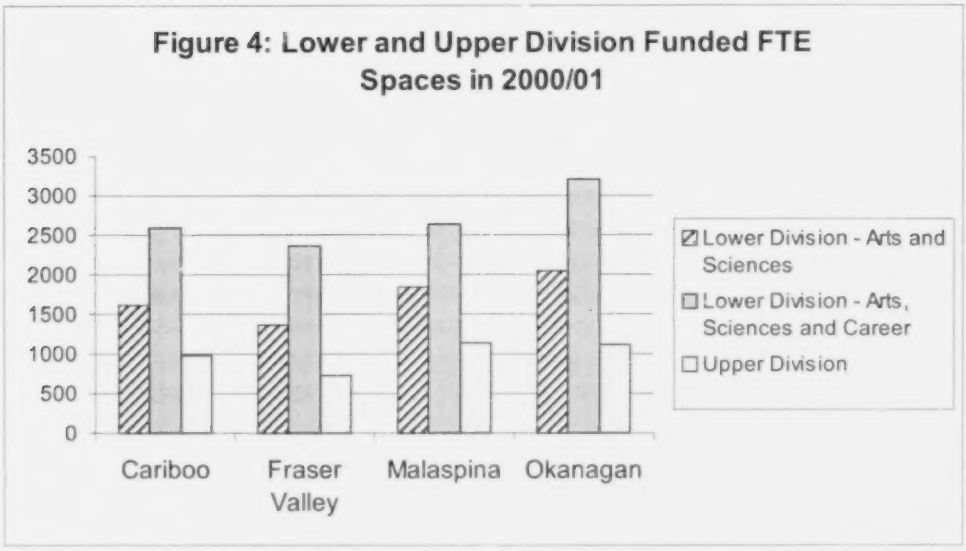
The provincial funding for both the university sector and for the college, university college and institute sector is based on a grant per FTE space, but the similarities end at that point.[5] An established university receives a budget letter from the Ministry stating the amount of the grant and providing two FTE targets, one for graduate and the other for undergraduate spaces. The new FTE spaces are provided at a single value for all universities and programs, $7,000 per FTE space in 2000/01. On occasion, the province has included a target for growth in a specific program such as nursing or information technology, but in general the funding approach does not direct the universities to a specific allocation of seats by program or year.

A university college or degree-granting institute receives quite a different budget letter from the Ministry that provides separate FTE targets for each program and grant amounts that vary by program area, level of program and by institution. For example, in their 2000 budget letters, the five university colleges each received a program profile that had between 38 and 47 separate FTE targets including different targets in lower division and upper division degree programs. There is some flexibility for university colleges to move resources among programs and levels, but they are accountable to the Ministry in meeting the target set out in the program profile.

5 There are even differences in this basic approach since the university sector uses a credit-based approach to counting FTE spaces while the college, university college and institute sector uses a student contact hours approach to counting FTE spaces.

As Figure 3 illustrates, the grants per FTE space are quite different for comparable undergraduate degree programs at universities and university colleges.



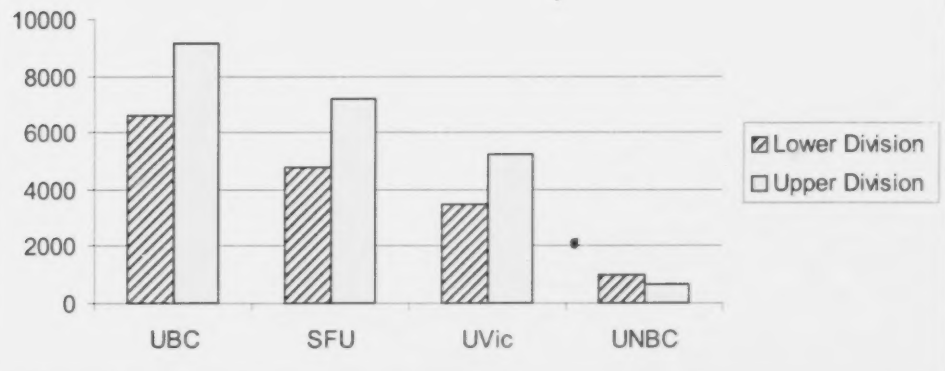


There may be valid reasons for these different funding approaches, but the significant differences between universities and university colleges and between upper and lower division at the university colleges has an indirect impact on admissions and transfer. Figure 4 illustrates the lower and upper division spaces at Cariboo, Fraser Valley, Malaspina and Okanagan and Figure 5 includes similar information for UBC, SFU, UVic and UNBC. A comparison of the two figures demonstrates that the university colleges clearly have a much smaller proportion of their FTE spaces in upper division than do their university counterparts. The university colleges have an average of 57 upper division spaces for every 100 arts and sciences spaces in first and second year. If career programs, many of which lead to degrees are considered, then the university colleges have only 39 upper division spaces for every 100 transferable lower division spaces. Kwantlen University College has not been included in this figure because it did not begin to offer upper division programs until 1998/99 and naturally has a small proportion of upper division spaces in 2000/01.

Since lower division FTE spaces receive a relatively lower provincial grant and upper division FTE spaces receive a relatively higher provincial grant at university colleges, there may be a funding incentive for the Ministry to expand lower division programs more rapidly than upper division programs. Like institutions, the Ministry must balance FTE targets with available funds and it can purchase about two lower division FTE spaces in degree programs at a university college for every upper division FTE.

The pattern for universities, where lower and upper division programs receive the same grants from government, is quite different from that of university colleges. Figure 5 shows that UBC, SFU and UVic have substantially more upper division spaces than lower division spaces. UNBC is more similar to the university colleges with less upper division than lower division FTE spaces.

Figure 5: Lower and Upper Division Actual FTE Spaces at Universities in 1999/2000



In addition to funding, history and mandate are undoubtedly factors in these ratios, but demand from students for upper division programs at university colleges does not appear to be a factor. The university college representatives interviewed for this study report that demand is strong for most of their upper division programs and waitlists are common for many programs. The question for the province is whether the university colleges, and degree-granting institutes, will be able to increase their capacity in upper division programs to allow more transfer students. If the answer is yes, and it appears that it should be, then the Ministry's funding approach should be examined to see if it is unintentionally limiting the capacity of these institutions to provide upper division programs. If the funding approach is limiting capacity, then appropriate changes should be made so that there is adequate capacity in upper division programs.

Institutional Perspectives

As noted earlier, the effectiveness of British Columbia's transfer system is largely dependent upon the policies and practices of the institutions. Appendix 3 provides a broad outline of the transfer student admission policies for each of the degree-granting institutions. Although all of the degree-granting institutions receive transfer students, institutional mandates, demands and experiences have led to different approaches among the universities, university colleges and institutes.

In order to gain an institutional perspective on transfer, interviews were conducted with representatives from a number of B.C. institutions. The objective was not to acquire a comprehensive system-wide statement on accessibility for transfer students, but rather to gain insights and ideas from registrars and others who are actively involved in the admissions and transfer process. The interviews were structured in accordance with the questions set out in Appendix 4, but were flexible enough to pursue further issues that emerged during the course of discussions.

A. UNIVERSITIES

The established universities receive the vast majority of transfer students and have detailed policies with respect to transfer. University policies are set out in the calendar and are reviewed regularly within the context of their own enrolment management models, Ministry FTE targets, student demand and the culture of the university.

These admissions policies appear to be fair and equitable for transfer students in comparison with high school or other categories of applicants. Certainly the university representatives contacted in this study expressed a strong commitment to provide access for transfer students and to an effective system.

Student demand exceeds supply for many university programs and not every qualified student gains access to a university. For example, as Table 1 noted, 1,488 qualified secondary school applicants and 738 qualified transfer applicants did not receive offers of admission from any of the four established universities in the Fall of 2000. The published grade point averages required for admission are the minimum standard and in practice both Grade 12 and transfer applicants have faced higher grade point average requirements. Several representatives commented that admission standards required of direct entries from high school has been particularly high in recent years.

University representatives, and their colleagues at the university colleges and institutes, also noted that the institution had a particular commitment to continuing students. In other words, students who are admitted to the institution can continue their studies as long as they meet the standards set for continuation. Unlike the entrance requirements, the published requirements for continuation do not appear to change as a result of demand. One could see this approach as preferential treatment for continuing students and conclude that it does not recognize a "system" approach to transfer based on merit. However, since B.C.'s twenty-eight institutions are independent, it appears to be logical pragmatic and defensible that the needs of those students who are already part of the institution take some precedence over the needs of those students who are not yet part of the institution.

Royal Roads University and the Technical University of British Columbia (Tech BC) are both new universities with distinctive mandates so they do not have the same policy context as the other universities. As noted in Appendix 3, Royal Roads has established a number of block transfer agreements with B.C. post-secondary institutions for admission into its undergraduate programs.

Tech BC staff noted that they have had a number of interesting policy discussions within the University and with the Ministry, BCCAT and the Degree Program Review Committee with respect to their mandate and transfer credit policy. The challenge for Tech BC has been balancing transfer with a legislated mandate to offer specialized degree programs in the applied, technological and related professional fields that contribute to the economic development of British Columbia. With this strong emphasis on economic development, Tech BC has been developing unique degree programs, but has also been proactive in taking new approaches in order to help achieve this balance between unique programs and transfer.

B. UNIVERSITY COLLEGES AND INSTITUTES

The university colleges in British Columbia have obviously undergone significant changes as result of their degree granting status. However, while some university college representatives reported that offering degrees has led to extensive changes in admissions policies others suggested that policy changes had been minor at their institutions. While the policies for transfer students are generally the same as they are for direct entry students, some university colleges have revised the policies for admission into third year to incorporate higher grade point average requirements.

The university colleges note that they try to be as accessible as possible for third and fourth year students, but that it has not always been possible. For example, while wait lists are common for first and second year programs the institutions are often able to accommodate students who are initially on those wait lists. The situation appears to be quite different for upper level courses and one registrar noted that even a student near the top of a wait list for a third year course would be fortunate to gain access.

Policies and practices with respect to transfer may still be evolving at the university colleges because it is a different model of degree-granting institution. Some university college representatives mentioned that new policy options are before their education councils and others noted that there was increasing interest in managing student flow and refining enrolment management.

The *Access for All* initiative that established the university colleges also created the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer and placed a high profile on transfer. Yet despite its emphasis on transfer, the initiative did not suggest that the university colleges might play an important role as receiving institutions. Instead, the emphasis was on retention with the university colleges providing degree access to students already living in their region. The university colleges did report that transfers into the institution are increasing each year and they would describe themselves as both receiving and sending institutions. Still, transfer students appear to represent a relatively small percentage of enrolment at this time and the more significant impact that degree granting has had on the university colleges has been the significant retention of their own students into third and fourth year studies at the university college. Prior to the creation of the university colleges these students would have transferred to other universities or not continued with further studies. In fact, several university colleges reported that many of their

degree students would not have even started a degree program without the opportunity to complete all four years in their own community.

While the university colleges, except Kwantlen, offer some of their degrees in arts, sciences or other more traditional areas, they have also been asked by the Ministry to offer new types of applied degree programs. Like Tech BC, therefore, they face the policy challenge of trying to balance unique program design with a desire to be accessible to transfer students.

Although BCIT and the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design are quite new to degree-granting status, both have had a long history as receiving institutions. About three-quarters of the students at BCIT and half the students at Emily Carr transfer to these provincial institutes from another post-secondary institution. Both institutions had developed policies with respect to transfer students prior to gaining degree-granting status and they report only minor policy refinements resulting from the new mandate. Both institutes consider themselves as transfer friendly institutions that are experienced and comfortable with the role. Their admission policies are consistent for secondary school applicants and transfer students, but as with other institutions the requirements have increased slightly over the years.

Student Perspectives

Institutional self-perceptions of whether or not their admission and transfer policies are fair may not always coincide with the perceptions of students at the institutions. This study did not collect those perceptions, but it is appropriate to reference some of the work that has been done in this area.

The *2000 B.C. College and Institute Student Outcomes Survey* is funded jointly by the Ministry and participating institutions and indicates continuing high levels of satisfaction in students' transfer experience[6]. The annual telephone survey of former students contacts them nine to twenty months after leaving their program of study at a B.C. college, institute, or university college. The researchers surveyed over 18,000 former college students and found that more than 6,000 continued their studies in a B.C. public post-secondary institution.

The results are exceptionally positive with respect to the effectiveness of transfer within British Columbia. Overall 86% of students who expected to transfer credits were very satisfied or satisfied with their transfer experience and just 7% reported that they were not satisfied. Almost all of the continuing students (95%) were able to enroll in their program of choice, with little variation across receiving institutions. The transfer students were also very successful, 91% overall, in gaining admission to their first choice of institution. The following bullets show that the success rate was high across all institutions:

- 83% for colleges
- 86% for institutes or agencies
- 84% for university colleges
- 93% for universities
- 92% for those continuing in the same institution.

Furthermore, 86% of continuing students overall were able to get all their desired courses in the first semester. There is wider variation among the institutions on this indicator, but the accessibility of courses is still quite positive across all institutions:

- 78% for colleges
- 96% for institutes or agencies
- 77% for university colleges
- 85% for universities.

The survey did highlight a few situations in which student expectations were not met quite so effectively. For example 26% of BCIT students, more than twice the system average, report that they were unable to transfer some or all of their credits when they transferred to a new institution. Students in certain specialized programs also experienced higher than average unmet transfer expectations. In these situations, they often acknowledged that the program was not designed for transfer.

6 *Admission and Transfer Experiences of Students Continuing their Studies in British Columbia*, A Research Report, prepared for BCCAT by the Centre for Education Information.

Trends

There are a number of trends that provide insights into the British Columbia transfer system. Perhaps the first trend to consider is whether the post-secondary system has been able to manage its growing enrolments in undergraduate programs and increase the number of degree graduates in the province. It is obvious that British Columbia's population has grown significantly in the last decade and that the province has increased both the number of degree granting institutions and the number of FTE student spaces during this period. Perhaps less obvious is whether this rapidly changing post-secondary system has been able to move the increased number of students effectively through an increasingly complex degree-granting system. Table 2 shows the changes in British Columbia since The Provincial Access Committee Report.

Table 2:
Demographic And Institutional Changes, 1989-1999

	1989	1999	PERCENT CHANGE
British Columbia Population[7]	3,198,547	4,028,132	26%
Degree Granting Institutions	4	14[8]	250%
Undergraduate FTE Spaces[9]	93,733	137,969	47%
Undergraduate Degrees Conferred[10]	8,286	14,713	78%

Table 2 illustrates that British Columbia's degree granting capacity in terms of institutions, student spaces and degrees conferred has increased much more rapidly than population growth. In addition, since the growth in degrees conferred exceeds the growth in spaces, students are able to proceed effectively through the post-secondary system and complete degrees. Some of the growth in degrees conferred undoubtedly reflects a larger proportion of FTE spaces going towards degree programs during this period, but it remains impressive.

The University of Northern British Columbia, Okanagan University College, Malaspina University-College, the University College of the Cariboo and the University College of the Fraser Valley were designed to improve access to degree programs outside of Vancouver and Victoria. In addition, the expanded mandates for BCIT, the Emily Carr Institute and the creation of Royal Roads University and the Technical University have enhanced the range of choices for seeking degrees. Therefore, the second trend to examine is whether there have been changes in the transfer patterns from different parts of British Columbia to UBC, SFU and UVic.

7 Statistics Canada, British Columbia Population 1971-2000.

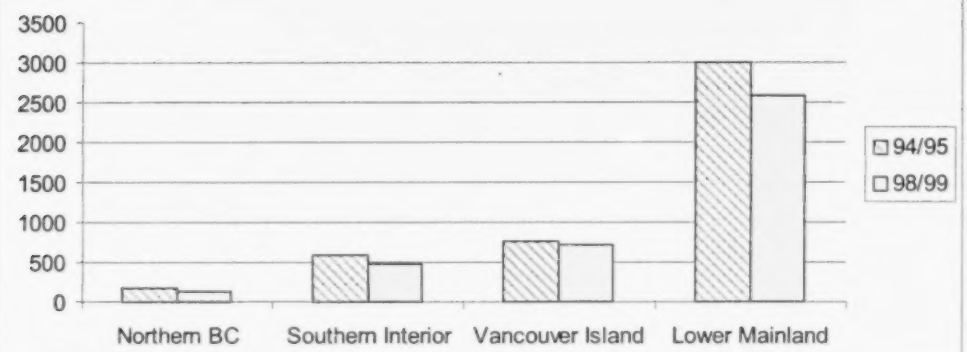
8 Seven of the ten new degree granting institutions were existing institutions with expanded mandates, two were completely new institutions and one was changed from a military college to university.

9 University FTEs from TUPC Tudbase. College FTE numbers include all program areas and are from the Ministry's History of FTEs.

10 Degree Data for Universities from TUPC Tudbase and College Degree Data from MAETT.

Figure 6 shows the change in transfers from Northern British Columbia, the Southern Interior, Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland to the three largest universities from 1994/95 to 1998/99.

Figure 6: Transfers by Region to UBC, SFU and UVic 1994/95 and 1998/99



Source: BCCAT reports on profiles of transfer students to UBC, SFU and UVic.

For each of the four regions, transfer to the three largest universities declined during this period despite the growth in overall enrolments and it appears that the new degree granting options are affecting the choices of students. For example, the University of Victoria noted that it has traditionally drawn many students from the southern interior of British Columbia, but the creation of university colleges in the Cariboo and Okanagan have had some impact on their transfer students. Another example is the University of Northern British Columbia which began operations in 1994, but in 1998/99 and 1999/00, admitted a total of 634 transfer students from B.C. colleges or university colleges and 52.4% of them were from southern British Columbia.[11]

Simon Fraser University showed the largest decline in the number of transfer students, but it continues to allocate a relatively large proportion of new admissions for transfer students. In the mid-1990s, the university had a much larger proportion of spaces available for transfer students than either the University of British Columbia or the University of Victoria. In addition, SFU has a preferential policy for transfer of college students who hold the Associate Degree. Still, the reduction in transfer spaces at Simon Fraser University has had a significant impact especially on the colleges in the Lower Mainland that provided almost 82% of the transfers to the university in 1994/95.

The changing patterns for transfer in British Columbia lead to a comparison of trends for college transfers and the direct entry from Grade 12. These two groups together represent the vast majority of new students admitted into British Columbia institutions. The Office of Analytical Studies at Simon Fraser

11 Carol Yates, *Profile of B.C. College Transfer Students Admitted to the University of Northern British Columbia, 1998/99 and 1999/2000.* BCCAT sponsored research report, March 2001.

University has also tracked the trends of college transfer students and direct entries from Grade 12 from 1992/93 to 1998/99 to UBC, SFU, UVic and UNBC and the results are compared in Table 3[12].

Table 3:
Number of Transfer Students and Secondary School Students Admitted to UBC, SFU, UVic and UNBC

	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99
Transfer Students	3,613	4,239	4,751	4,222	4,434	4,313	4,390
Secondary School Students	4,754	5,058	5,524	6,574	7,056	6,984	7,093

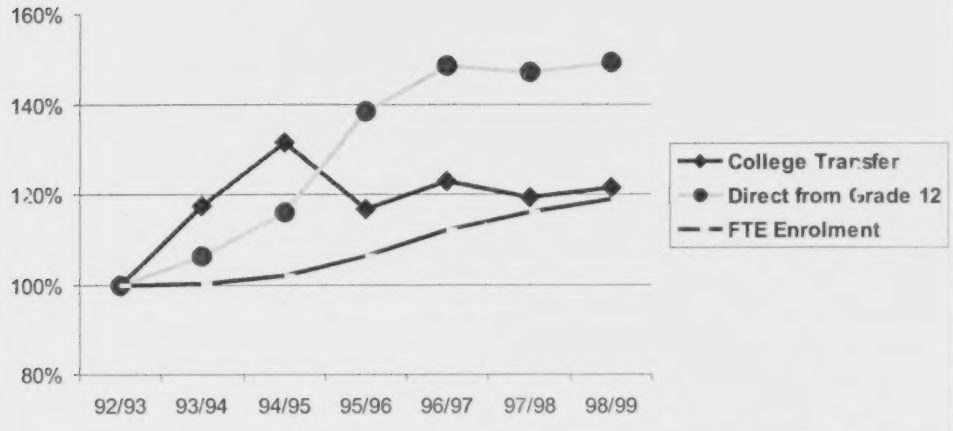
These numbers show dramatic increases in the number of new students being admitted directly from secondary school particularly from 1992/93 to 1996/97. An initial reaction may be to conclude that college transfers are being denied access to accommodate applications from high school. While that conclusion may be partially accurate, there are other variables that must be considered in this trend. One factor is that student demand is a critical consideration in most enrolment management models and, as Appendix 1 shows, the demand from secondary school applicants has increased significantly. Even with the significant increase in admissions for this category, almost 1,500 qualified Grade 12 applicants annually are not receiving offers of admission.

A second factor is that there are many more options available to potential transfer students than there were in 1992/93. Thousands of new spaces have been created in the third and fourth year of degree programs of university colleges and institutes and many students are choosing to complete their degrees at these institutions rather than transfer. In addition, many new and unique degree programs have been approved and implemented at these institutions to provide students with program choices that may not be available at any of the established universities.

Another factor is the overall capacity of the universities to accept new students. The question to ask in this context is whether the number of admissions for transfer students has kept pace with the total increase in enrolment growth at the universities. Figure 7 shows that since 1992/93 the percentage increase in the headcount number of transfer students has been generally consistent with the overall FTE enrolment growth at the universities during this period. However, since 1994/95, the enrolment of students directly from high school has soared and enrolment from transfer students has declined.

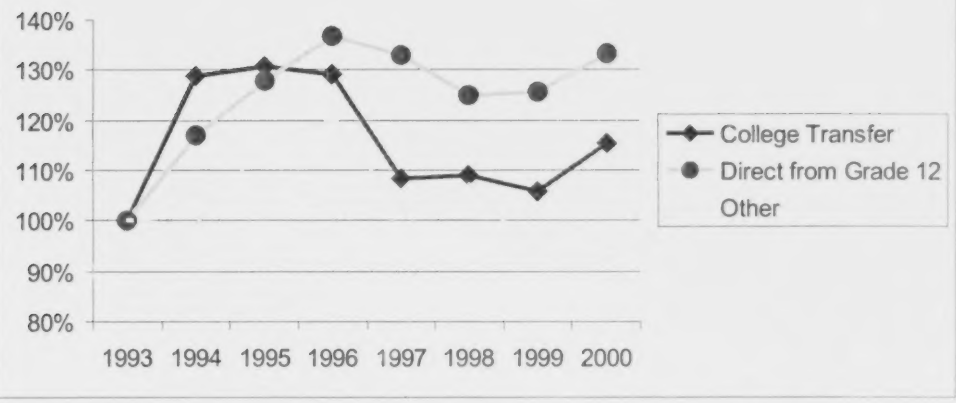
12 A more comprehensive table of admissions by university is available in Appendix 2.

Figure 7: Undergraduate Enrolment Patterns at UBC, SFU, UVic and UNBC



Source: TUPC Annual Reports and TUDBASE

Figure 8: Change in Admission Targets by Category for UBC, SFU and UVic: 1993 to 2000



Source: TUPC Annual Reports and TUDBASE

Not surprisingly, the patterns for secondary school admissions and transfer admissions reflect the enrolment management plans of the universities. The Annual Reports of the University Presidents' Council have since 1995 included a table reporting the admissions targets and cut-off points set by UBC, SFU and UVic for secondary school admissions, transfer students and others.[13] Appendix 2 includes a summary of the admission targets for these three universities from 1993 to 2000 and Figure 8 illustrates the percentage change for each of these three categories since 1993. The targets for secondary school students have increased more than the targets for college transfers, but it is primarily the "other" students who have had their access reduced by the influx from secondary school.

The universities have the clear, legislated authority to set admission requirements, but two issues were raised with respect to admission requirements.

The first issue was whether the general admission or minimal requirements published in university calendars are appropriate in 2001 given that the operating requirements for admission have been much higher than the published level for many years. Would the universities accept all British Columbia applicants who met the general admission standards if all the basic requirements of operating funding, space and available faculty were resolved? One might expect this answer to be yes if those general admission requirements were appropriate, but there was a general sense that all these British Columbia applicants would not be accepted even if the resources were available. Further study of this perception is required, but if in fact the established minimums are not at a reasonable level it appears that universities should consider revisions to these standards.

The second issue was with respect to the options available to transfer applicants who meet general admission requirements, but do not gain admission to university. One of the strengths of British Columbia's post-secondary system is the "second chance" function that colleges and university colleges play particularly for secondary school students who are not originally admissible to university.[14] These students often go on to earn associate degrees and degrees either through the institution where they are first accepted or by transferring successfully to another institution. However, it is uncertain what happens to the transfer applicants who meet general requirements for university access, but do not gain access to UBC, SFU, UVic or UNBC. They may continue studies at the original institution or attend another degree-granting institution or perhaps they end their studies without attaining a degree. A further study of the unmet demand for these unsuccessful applicants is warranted especially since transfer applicants, who have met the published criteria for admission, may not have the same "second chance" option that has long been available to secondary school applicants.

13 This group of students may include mature students, students from other provinces or countries, degree holders, university transfers, students from technical programs and special entries.

14 Many college and university college students are well-qualified for direct entry into a B.C. university, but enroll in a college or university college for reasons including location, program choices, class sizes and lower tuition fees.

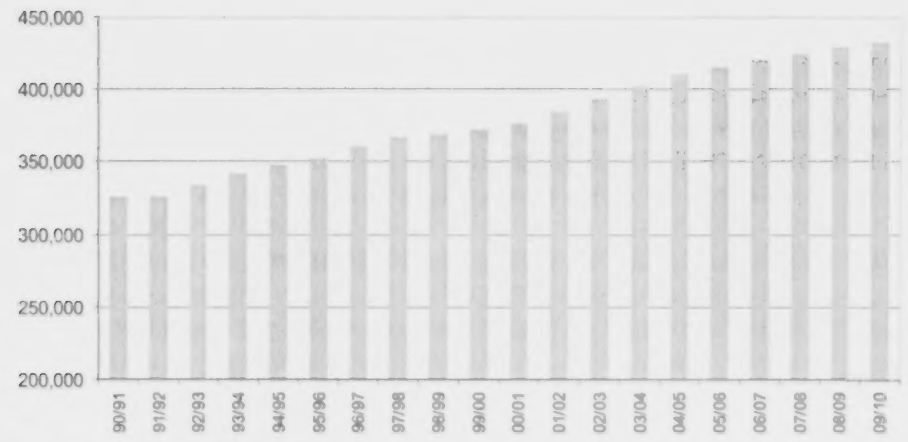
System Capacity

The most common issue raised during the interviews for this study was system capacity and its effect on the policy context for admissions and transfer. Although enrolment in undergraduate programs has increased by almost 50% over ten years there is simply not enough capacity in the British Columbia post-secondary education system to meet the demand from qualified students from high school or other institutions.

Every institutional representative provided examples of qualified students not gaining admission to specific programs or the institution because of limited capacity. Many institutions try to accommodate the excess demand by accepting more students than the Ministry FTE targets specify, but waitlists and "turn away" figures are often quoted as anecdotal evidence of excess demand. The province does not have a good system of measuring unduplicated demand, but Provincial Education Numbers may help provide that information in the future. Still, the analysis of unduplicated applicants done by SFU shows that 2,226 qualified applicants were denied admission to one of four B.C. universities last September. In addition, as Appendix 2 demonstrates, the grades required by students to gain admission have generally increased because of the intense competition for available spaces.

The competition for seats is likely to continue to be intense for the next decade. Figure 9 shows the B.C. population increases and projections for the 18 to 24 year age cohort from 1990/91 to 2009/2010. Although the average age at some institutions is higher, this cohort represents the majority of students in undergraduate degree programs. Therefore, system capacity will continue to be a primary educational and financial challenge for British Columbia in the next decade.

Figure 9: 18-24 Age Cohort - Actual And Projected



Source: BC Stats.

The Ministry also appears to be well aware that student demand exceeds system capacity and increased funding for new FTE spaces to increase system capacity has been a major component of the provincial government's post-secondary education strategy in recent years. British Columbia's post-secondary system has been growing more rapidly than that of any other province and that growth may be an important factor in the ability of institutions to manage transfer effectively. If the province is unable to maintain its post-secondary growth rate during the next decade, there may be emerging transfer problems that are presently disguised by the rapid growth that has occurred since 1989.

Programs

There were surprisingly few programs identified as specific challenges for transfer. Many institutional representatives suggested that, except for the demand and supply issues that affected all categories, there was nothing that could be considered a major problem for transfer students. In addition, there are ebbs and flows over the years that may cause some programs to be less accessible for transfer students, but these challenges are usually addressed within a year. Some program areas were identified as challenges, however, and they fell into three categories: 1) high demand programs; 2) collaborative programs involving several but not all B.C. institutions; and 3) institutionally unique programs.

The high demand programs that were identified included such common areas as English or Psychology and programs such as Computer Science that appear to be most attractive in the current job market. Essentially, the challenges in these programs are simply a more focused example of the system capacity issues. There are not any unusual or technical problems in actually transferring into these programs, but the high demand tends to highlight any challenges that do exist.

The B.C. post-secondary system has developed collaborative programs that provide an integrated approach to offering a program across several institutions. These collaborative initiatives appear to be positive and effective methods for delivering programs, but they were referenced both positively and negatively with respect to transfer. For example, 10 post-secondary institutions in B.C. collaborate to offer a common nursing curriculum and programs. Several institutions that are part of this collaborative nursing partnership highlighted it as a particularly constructive approach to facilitating transfer. Other institutions that operated nursing programs that are not part of the collaborative nursing program suggested that it was difficult for their students to transfer to the collaborative program.

Finally, programs offered at only a single institution in the province can create transfer difficulties. The concern relative to some of these programs is that their requirements are so specialized that a student almost has to take the full program at the institution offering the degree. The provincial degree approval process is a regulatory mechanism and, like most regulatory processes, is concerned with consumer protection. Therefore, unique program proposals have raised the question of consumer protection for the students who register for the program. Specifically, when students enter a highly specialized program at one institution what happens when they decide to transfer to another institution?

This issue has become more pronounced as the province has pushed the new degree-granting institutions to develop new types of undergraduate degrees. It is also a difficult balance for the institution developing the new degree program. As one representative observed, "the province asks the institution to develop degree programs that are different and innovative, but when the programs are developed the provincial approval processes push the program back towards more traditional approaches." However, representatives from the Degree Program Review Committee point out that the Committee has, in fact, recommended to the Minister degree programs with unique combinations of majors or innovative delivery and evaluation systems. Transfer issues with respect to unique programs may be addressed through effective communications and advice to students considering these unique programs, but further policy work should be undertaken to find the balance between uniqueness and transferability.

Coordination

The Ministry and the post-secondary institutions report that they are comfortable with the current operations of the transfer system in British Columbia. While there were differing perspectives expressed on subjects such as block transfer, unique programs or upper level capacity, all parties generally agreed that the transfer system works effectively. Inevitably, issues will and do arise in the complex interactions of thousands of students and twenty-eight independent institutions, but these issues are usually resolved through bi-lateral discussions or with the assistance of the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer.

There was a general consensus that it is appropriate for the Ministry to set the broad policy and funding context for transfer, but not intervene in institutional decision-making with respect to these issues. The Ministry noted that it respects the independence of the institutions with respect to transfer and was clearly comfortable with the system role played by the Council. With the Council taking the lead on system coordination, the Ministry's primary interest is obtaining periodic information that demonstrates how students are flowing through British Columbia's post-secondary education system. The Ministry suggested that the Centre for Education Information could play an on-going role in ensuring that the information was collected and disseminated effectively.

Most institutional representatives were quite emphatic that each institution should determine the proportion of seats available for transfer students based on its own information and policies. Several noted that more information, particularly if it was available on-line, would help everyone manage transfer issues more effectively.

Institutional representatives also reported that the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer has played a positive role in providing information with respect to transfer and should continue to play that role. In addition, they noted that the Council had been helpful by raising issues, but generally letting the institutions manage the solutions. For some difficult issues, the Council also was constructive by nudging institutions towards mutually acceptable solutions. In fact, many representatives specifically used the word "nudging" and pointed out that it was the gentle, but persistent approach of the Council that was the key to its success.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Consultants' reports often conclude with descriptions of what is "broken" and recommendations on next steps to "fix" the problems. However, the transfer system in British Columbia's post-secondary system does not appear to need "fixing" but simply fine-tuning and regular maintenance.

In a decade of extraordinary growth, students have moved through the system efficiently to obtain degrees and they report high levels of satisfaction with transfer overall. The perspective from post-secondary administrators is also positive with many institutional representatives noting that there is a high level of cooperation among the institutions expressing strong support for the B.C. Council of Admissions and Transfer. Given the complexities of thousands of transfer students each year, twenty-eight autonomous institutions (many of them new or with new mandates) and the significant changes in the 1990s, it appears that the B.C. transfer system works remarkably well.

However, as we look towards the future, it is clear that British Columbia still has relatively small degree-granting capacity and will face heavy student demand for the next decade. While the transfer system does appear to be effective, there is a nagging feeling that perhaps good fortune has played an important part in that effectiveness. After all, the number of student spaces has grown dramatically in the past decade allowing institutions some degree of flexibility to manage admissions and transfer. If the system does not continue to grow to meet demand, the public post-secondary may begin to see more significant issues arise with respect to transfer. There are, of course, many excellent economic and social reasons to expand the number of spaces in the B.C. public post-secondary education system, but continued growth may also be important to help maintain the enviable record of our transfer system.

During the past decade, most students have been able to transfer between institutions successfully and obtain appropriate transfer credit for courses or programs previously completed. During recent years, there has been considerable improvement in the ability of students to become better informed of transfer credit processes and institutions have become more flexible and responsive in the granting of transfer credit. Additionally, there have been improvements in administrative procedures that have removed or reduced barriers to student access. Certainly no other province in Canada has such a large and comprehensive system of articulated transfer credit opportunities for students that are well documented and assessed as to their effectiveness (although Alberta also has an effective transfer system as well).

The following five recommendations, therefore, are not urgent calls for remedial action, but rather suggestions to make a good system better.

1. INFORMATION:

The B.C. Council of Admissions and Transfer commissioned a number of reports that have vastly increased the collective knowledge on transfer in British Columbia. As noted in the Supply and Demand section of this report, further information is particularly required on the admissions of direct entrants and transfer students to the university colleges, Royal Roads University, the Technical University, the B.C. Open University, the Emily Carr Institute of Art and design and the B.C. Institute of Technology. There are two initiatives that will provide a rich new source of data for admissions and transfer research useful for both institutional and system-wide planning. These initiatives are the

assigning of Personal Education Numbers (PEN) to all students in the B.C. public post-secondary system and the creation of the Data Warehouse for the college, university college and institute system. The Council should recommend to the Ministry that steps be taken encouraging the assignment of PENS to all students in the post-secondary system to maximize the utility of future data analyses.

2. UNMET DEMAND:

B.C. does not have system-wide information on what happens to students who apply to transfer to universities and do not receive an offer of admission. BCCAT should initiate a follow-up study on these applicants to determine whether there is a problem with unmet demand for transfer students and, if so, to propose recommendations for addressing the issue. Consideration should also be given to requiring PENS for all student applications to post-secondary institutions so that accurate measures of post-secondary admissions and unmet demand can be established.

3. COORDINATION AND PLANNING:

Transfer among the post-secondary institutions of British Columbia has worked primarily because of the cooperation of the institutions and the positive role of BCCAT. However, it is clear that institutions sometimes make changes to admission requirements or enrolment plans that affect other institutions without sharing this information in a timely manner. BCCAT should consider convening an annual meeting that would provide a brief update from each institution of changes in admission requirements and enrolment projections or plans. The purpose of the meeting would not be to debate the proposed changes, but rather to share information that could improve the coordination and planning for transfer.

4. CONSISTENT FUNDING APPROACHES:

The different provincial funding approaches to the universities and other degree-granting institutions reflect the post-secondary system of 1989 rather than 2001. The Ministry should initiate an independent analysis to assess the impact of the distinctive approaches and, if warranted, make revisions.

5. UNIQUE DEGREE PROGRAMS:

The priorities of government, changes in technology and the economy and the influx of new degree-granting institutions have created a wide variety of unique and/or applied degree programs in British Columbia. The B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer should also undertake a study of the unique and applied degree programs that have been initiated in British Columbia since 1995 to examine if students can transfer into or out of these specialized programs effectively.

Appendix 1:
Applications and Admissions

APPLICATIONS FROM GRADE 12

- Applications from Grade 12 increased by 26% from 1995 to 2000, but offers to students increased by only 14% during the same period.
- The number of qualified applicants not receiving offers of admission increased from 764 in 1997 to 1,488 in 2000.

Trends For Unduplicated Applicants From Secondary School, 1995-2000

	TOTAL APPS	QUALIFIED APPS	OFFERS	REGISTRANTS
1995	10,639	NA	8,444	6,395
1996	11,347	NA	8,851	6,566
1997	11,433	9,601	8,837	6,584
1998	11,790	10,004	8,702	6,348
1999	12,512	10,387	8,785	6,520
2000	13,439	11,141	9,653	7,144

Percentage Trends For Unduplicated Applicants From Secondary School, 1995-2000

	Percent of Qualified Applicants from Grade 12	Percent of Qualified Applicants who Received an Offer of Admission	Percent of those Receiving an Offer who Register
1995	NA	NA	75.7
1996	NA	NA	74.2
1997	84.0	92.0	74.5
1998	84.9	87.0	72.9
1999	83.0	84.6	74.2
2000	82.9	86.6	74.0

APPLICATIONS FROM COLLEGES, UNIVERSITY COLLEGES OR INSTITUTES

Unduplicated Applicants From College, Fall 2000

	TOTAL APPS	QUALIFIED APPS	OFFERS	REGISTRANTS
2000	6,804	5,334	4,596	3,749

College Transfer Percentages, Fall 2000

	Percent of Qualified Applicants from College	Percent of Qualified Applicants who Received an Offer of Admission	Percent of those Receiving an Offer who Register
2000	78.4	86.2	81.6

Source: Simon Fraser University, Office of Analytical Studies.

Appendix 2:
Admission Targets, Cut-Off Points and Admissions for New Entry Students: Arts and Science

A. FALL ADMISSION TARGETS

DIRECT FROM SECONDARY SCHOOL	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
UBC	2,550	2,550	2,600	3,050	3,115	3,075	3,066	2,920
SFU	1,425	1,590	1,462	1,600	1,718	1,650	1,800	2,012
UVic	626	1,244	1,819	1,647	1,280	1,028	920	1,208
Sub-Total	**4,601**	**5,384**	**5,881**	**6,297**	**6,113**	**5,753**	**5,786**	**6,140**

TRANSFER FROM COLLEGE TO YEAR 2 AND 3	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
UBC	355	575	600	760	695	748	785	705
SFU	875	930	767	800	685	675	580	733
UVic	505	728	903	680	501	470	469	567
Sub-Total	**1,735**	**2,233**	**2,270**	**2,240**	**1,881**	**1,893**	**1,834**	**2,005**

OTHER STUDENTS[15]	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1998	2000
UBC	575	575	600	760	695	747	569	544
SFU	750	830	864	850	775	775	770	711
UVic	569	476	725	669	469	505	432	503
Sub-Total	**1,894**	**1,881**	**2,189**	**2,279**	**1,939**	**2,027**	**1,771**	**1,758**

Source: The University Presidents' Council Annual Report, 1994 to 1999, and Tudbase tables for 1999 and 2000 data.

15 This group of students may include mature students and students from other provinces or countries. The cut-off points vary by group and by year level and are as high or higher than those for the comparable direct entry points from the B.C. secondary schools or colleges.

B. CUT-OFF POINTS

Direct from Secondary School: ARTS	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
UBC	3.00	3.00	74%	72%	73%	75%	76%	78%
SFU	3.00	77%	75%	75%	75%	78%	80%	76%
UVic	3.25	70%	67%	67%	72%	73%	76%	71%

Direct from Secondary School: SCIENCES	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
UBC	3.39	3.38	82%	82%	81%	82%	82%	83%
SFU	3.00	2.89	2.75	2.75	2.75	76%	78%	76%
UVic	3.25	70%	67%	67%	72%	73%	76%	71%

Transfer from College to Year 2: ARTS	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Arts								
UBC	2.65	2.65	2.30	2.00	2.20	2.30	2.70	2.50
SFU	2.55	2.50	2.50	2.40	2.50	2.80	3.00	3.00
UVic	2.80	60%	60%	60%	67%	68%	71%	65%

Transfer from College to Year 2: SCIENCES	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
UBC	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.00	2.20	2.40	2.60	2.50
SFU	2.50	2.40	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.50	2.80	2.70
UVic	2.80	60%	60%	60%	67%	68%	71%	65%

Source: The University Presidents' Council Annual Report 1994 to 1999, and Tudbase tables for 1999 and 2000 data.

C. ADMISSIONS OF TRANSFER STUDENTS AND SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ADMITTED TO UBC, SFU, UVIC AND UNBC FROM 1992/93 TO 1998/99

COLLEGE TRANSFER	92/93	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99
to UBC	982	1,191	1,137	1,112	1,418	1,366	1,526
to SFU	1,490	1,912	2,285	1,598	1,633	1,547	1,260
to UVic	1,141	1,136	1,329	1,512	1,383	1,400	1,288
to UNBC	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	316
Total	**3,613**	**4,239**	**4,751**	**4,222**	**4,434**	**4,313**	**4,390**

DIRECT FROM GRADE 12	92/93	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99
to UBC	2,414	2,701	2,411	2,928	3,486	3,503	3,457
to SFU	1,342	1,356	1,601	1,555	1,652	1,787	1,774
to UVic	998	1,001	1,512	2,091	1,918	1,694	1,537
to UNBC	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	325
Total	**4,754**	**5,058**	**5,524**	**6,574**	**7,056**	**6,984**	**7,093**

Appendix 3:
Policies on Admission of Transfer Students to Degree Programs, by Institution

UNIVERSITIES:

Royal Roads University

Royal Roads University is primarily a graduate institution, but it also provides upper level programs leading to undergraduate degrees in commerce and science. Transfer from British Columbia institutions into these undergraduate programs is managed through block transfer agreements.

Transfer Agreements

Royal Roads University has signed individual Block Credit transfer agreements with the following colleges and university colleges:

- British Columbia Institute of Technology – Business
- Camosun College – Business and Science
- Capilano College – Business
- College of New Caledonia – Business
- College of the Rockies – Business
- Douglas College – Business and Science
- Kwantlen University College – Business and Science
- Langara College - Business and Science
- Malaspina University-College – Commerce
- Northern Lights College – Business
- Northwest Community College – Business and Science
- Okanagan University College – Business
- Selkirk College – Business
- University College of the Cariboo – Business
- University College of the Fraser Valley – Business
- Vancouver Community College - Business

Simon Fraser University

Requirements for a Technical Institute or College of Applied Arts & Technology Applicant

- With a diploma from a recognized institute of technology or college of applied arts and technology, the applicant may be considered for admission with an average of 65%.
- Transfer credit is granted for programs as a block, and not on a course by course basis.

Requirements for a College or University College Applicant

- Applicants from a B.C. community or university college should take transferable courses at college. Applicants are directed to consult the BCCAT website for a list of courses that are transferable to SFU.
- Admission requirements are specific to each Faculty.

Technical University of British Columbia

As British Columbia's newest university the Technical University of British Columbia is naturally still developing policies and practices with respect to transfer. The mandate for Tech BC that is outlined under the *Technical University Act* requires the university to develop unique degree programs.

Partial Post-Secondary Credits

- Satisfactory completion of standard university entrance requirements
- Applicants must have attempted a minimum of 24 credits of university transferable courses. Any courses that are not university transferable will not be included in the calculation of your Admissions grade point average.
- A minimum final overall average of a C or equivalent (2.0 GPA or 60%) on TechBC's grading system calculated on the most recent 60 credits of university transferable work attempted. Where less than 60 credits have been attempted, the Admission GPA will be calculated on all post-secondary work attempted.

NOTE - All applicants who have completed fewer than 24 university transferable credits will be considered as secondary applicants.

University of British Columbia

Requirements for University, University College and Community College Applicants

- The minimum academic standing to qualify for admission is successful completion of 24 transferable credits with a "C" average (60% where 50% is a passing grade), or a grade point average of 2.0.
- Applicants presenting fewer than 24 credits are evaluated on the basis of both final secondary school grades and the partial post-secondary studies completed. Unless otherwise prescribed by the program to which admission is sought, academic standing is based on the average of all college or university courses attempted, including failures and repeated courses.
- In the case of applicants with more than 60 credits of prior study, the admission average is calculated on the basis of the most recently completed 60 credits. To be eligible for second year, applicants must normally have successfully completed 30 credits, and satisfied all promotion requirements for advancement to that year. Applicants to third year must have successfully completed 54 to 60 credits.
- In general, transfer credit is limited to the first two years of an undergraduate degree program, but credit at a more senior level is possible with the approval of the faculty concerned. No more than 60 credits of transfer credit, or 50 per cent of required program credits, are allowed in any program, and in some programs the maximum may be less.
- Courses completed at recognized universities and university colleges in British Columbia are granted credit on the basis of established equivalencies published in the *British Columbia Transfer Guide*.
- Official Post-Secondary Transcripts from all post-secondary (college/university) institutions attended must be submitted.
- Credits earned via prior learning assessment (PLA), challenge credit, or the equivalent, at another recognized post-secondary institution are acceptable at UBC, provided that the course to which those credits apply is recognized by the University as suitable for transfer credit. The University accepts only PLA credits which are assigned to specific courses.
- Courses successfully completed at recognized colleges in British Columbia and Yukon are granted transfer credit in accordance with agreed-upon equivalencies published in the *British Columbia Transfer Guide*.

University of Northern British Columbia

Requirements

- A minimum of 15 credit hours of acceptable transfer course work must be presented.
- A student applying to complete a four-year degree at UNBC may be eligible to receive up to 90 credit hours of transfer credit from a recognized sending institution.
- Applicability of transfer credit will vary with the number of electives and/or lower and upper division requirements for a particular degree.
- A minimum grade point average of 2.0 or C (63%), calculated based on all previous post-secondary institutions attended, is required.
- Any applicant who has been required to withdraw or who is placed on academic probation by the transferring institution must wait 3 semesters before applying for admission to UNBC.
- No transfer credit will be awarded for any course with a grade of less than 1.0 or D (50-59%).

Requirements for a College or University College Applicant

- To meet admission requirements, the cumulative grade point average (CGPA) on all transferable courses attempted must be at least 2.0 or C (63%).
- Transfer credit is awarded according to agreements articulated in the *B.C. Transfer Guide*.
- UNBC guarantees priority admission and full transfer credit (minimum of 60 credit hours) to students transferring with an Associate in Arts or Science degree.

Diplomas

- To meet admission requirements, students must present a minimum CGPA of 2.0 or C (63%).
- Transfer credit for articulated courses is awarded at the point of admission. Upon declaration of a major in a related degree program, students who hold specific Business Administration, Natural Resource Management or Environmental Studies Diplomas may be eligible for additional block credit.

Requirements for an Institute of Technology Applicant

- To meet admission requirements, the CGPA on all transferable courses attempted must be at least 2.0 or C (63%).
- Transfer credit is awarded towards a relevant UNBC degree program on an individual basis, to a maximum of 30 credits.

Requirements for a University Applicant

- Applicants must be in good academic standing at a Canadian university. The cumulative grade point average must be at least 2.0 (C). No credit will be awarded for any course with a grade of less than 1.0 (D).

University of Victoria

General Requirements

- Official transcripts are required in order to evaluate course work from other institutions for transfer credit.
- Transfer credit is not guaranteed and is dependent upon departmental evaluations.

Requirements for B.C. College, University College and University Applicants

- Transfer credit from B.C. community colleges will be assigned according to the equivalencies set out in the *B.C. Transfer Guide* for the year in which the courses were completed. The relevant academic department and Admissions Services determine transfer credit from other accredited institutions.
- Applicants require successful completion of at least 12 units of transferable courses with a minimum overall average equivalent to C
- The average is calculated from the grades for the most recent 12 units of university-level courses taken and includes repeated and failed courses.
- Applicants with less than 12 transferable units must have a minimum GPA of C on any post-secondary record, and meet the minimum requirements for admission to Year 1
- An applicant from a B.C. College is directed to check course work for transfer credit using the .

- Students who plan to begin their studies at another institution and transfer to UVic should ensure that courses they take are eligible for transfer credit in their planned program at UVic.

- Transfer credit granted in a degree program is limited and may not normally be applied to the final 30 units of the program. Exceptions to this regulation require the approval of the Dean of the faculty concerned.

Requirements for a Institute of Technology Applicant

- Applicants who have completed one full year at an institute of technology with a cumulative average of 80% are eligible for admission. Credit is considered on a course-by-course and case-by-case basis.
- Applicants who have completed in excess of one full year at an institute of technology with a minimum cumulative average of B are eligible for consideration. Credit is considered on a course-by-course and case-by-case basis.
- Block credit agreements have been established for some specific diploma programs to transfer to specific UVic degree programs. Normally, 30.0 units of block credit is granted to those admitted under such agreements.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGES

Kwantlen University College

- Applicants who plan to enroll in courses with college level course prerequisites that have been completed at another post-secondary institution must submit a Request for Advanced Standing form and provide an official transcript for evaluation. This should be done at least six (6) weeks prior to the date the applicant is scheduled to register.

Malaspina University-College

- Applicants who plan to enroll in courses with college level course prerequisites that have been completed at another post-secondary institution must submit a Request for Advanced Standing form and provide an official transcript for evaluation. This should be done at least six (6) weeks prior to the date the applicant is scheduled to register.

Okanagan University College

- For most OUC programs, admission is based on the date of the application. Depending on the program you apply for, that could mean your registration priority will be determined by the date you submit your OUC application.
- An applicant must meet all admission requirements of the program. In some programs, like the Bachelor of Education Five Year Program and Social Work, space is limited, admission is competitive and based on grade averages as well as completion of required courses. Students are admitted to these programs in third year, not first.

University College of the Cariboo

- The University College of the Cariboo has the same admission for requirements for transfer students as they do for applicants from Grade 12.

University College of the Fraser Valley

- Many students transfer to UCFV from other institutions. If you apply to a bachelor's degree program your transcripts will be evaluated upon application for admission, and transfer credit will be assigned as appropriate.
- Transfer credit is awarded on an institutional basis, not a program basis.
- How much (if any) of your transfer credit can be applied to your program will depend upon the type of courses you transferred.
- There are also limits on the amount of transfer credit that can be used in a program.
- You should discuss how your transfer credit will apply to your program, or your academic goal, with the program head, program assistant, or an educational advisor in Student Services.

INSTITUTES

British Columbia Institute of Technology

- The following official documents should accompany the Application for Admission form. BCIT reserves the right to request for official transcripts at any time before or after you have been accepted.
- Senior secondary school transcript showing courses taken, marks received and successful secondary school graduation.
- If applicable, all official post-secondary school transcripts. Please note: If you intend to apply for transfer credit for any courses within your program, only official transcripts will be accepted - photocopies are not valid.

Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design

- Applicants who have completed appropriate post-secondary studies at an accredited art institute, university, or community college may be considered for admission to the second or third year of study.
- Space in the second and third years is limited and not all applicants can be accommodated.
- Admission is based on the applicant's portfolio, post-secondary academic standing (minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a four-point scale required), written submission and, in the case of Media and Design programs, an interview.
- The year level to which transfer applicants are approved is determined by the portfolio assessment. Transfer credit granted is consistent with the portfolio assessment.
- The Schools of Media Arts and Design conduct admission interviews for transfer applicants.

Appendix 4:
Interview Questions

1. Are there policies or practices at the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology that either intentionally or unintentionally affect access for transfer students?

2. What are the policies at your institution that impact upon the admissibility of students into degree programs at your institution?

3. Are institutional admission practices consistent with institutional admission policies?

4. Can your student information systems easily identify and report incoming students by various admissions categories such as transfer and direct entry? (this question was asked of the university colleges, BCIT and Emily Carr)

5. Are there specific program areas or courses that face capacity challenges for transfer students?

6. How are admission numbers set for different categories of students?

7. What, if any, trends exist in admission numbers?

8. What are the financial, educational or other factors that guide institutional decisions to determine the balance of first year, second year, and upper division students in degree programs?

9. Given the total system capacity at any given time, how should the proportion of seats available for transfer students be determined?

10. Who should assume responsibility to work with post-secondary institutions to ensure an appropriate balance of seats is provided for qualified transfer students?

Bibliography

Andres, L. and Dawson, J. (1998). *Investigating Transfer Project Phase III: A History of Transfer Policy and Practice in British Columbia.* Research report prepared for the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer.

Centre for Education Information (2000). *Admissions and Transfer Experiences of Students Continuing their Studies in British Columbia*. Research report prepared for the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer.

Dennison, J. (2000). *Student Access and Mobility Within the British Columbia Post-Secondary System: A Critical Analysis of Research, Public Policy and the Role of the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer.* Research report prepared for the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer.

Heslop, J. (1999). *Profile of B.C. College Transfer Students Admitted to Simon Fraser University 1994/95 to 1998/99*. Research report prepared for the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer.

Heslop, J. *Analysis of Applications, Admissions and Registrations of B.C. College Transfer Applicants to B.C. Universities Fall, 2000*, Research report prepared for the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer.

Lambert-Maberly, A., Moi, L., Samnini, K., (2001) *A Profile of B.C. College Transfer Students Admitted to the University of British Columbia 1994/95 to 1999/00*. Research report prepared for the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer.

Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology (1992). *History of FTE's: 1988/89 – 1991/92.*

Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology (2000). *History of FTE's: 1996/97 – 1999/00.*

Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, (2000) April 20, 2000 provincial grant letters to universities and university colleges.

University Presidents' Council of British Columbia, Annual Reports, 1993 to 1999 and TUDBASE Tables

Wilson, A., McGuire, C. and Conway, C. (2000) *Profile of B.C. College Transfer Students Admitted to the University of Victoria 1994/95 to 1998/99*. Research report prepared for the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer.

Yates, C. (2001). *Profile of B.C. College Transfer Students Admitted to the University of Northern British Columbia, 1998/99 and 1999/2000.* Research report prepared for the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer.

Acknowledgements and Author's Note

Thanks to the following individuals who provided helpful advice and insights on the issues discussed in this report:

Gloria Back, Ministry of Advanced Education, Patti Beatty-Guenter, North Island College, Roger Blackman, Simon Fraser University, Trevor Braem, Okanagan University College, Bill Cooke, University College of the Fraser Valley, Bob Cowin, Douglas College, John Dennison, University of British Columbia, Finola Finlay, B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer, Dean Goard, University Presidents Council, Frank Gelin, B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer, David Glenn, University of Victoria, Dave Hannah, Technical University of British Columbia, Ron Heath, Simon Fraser University, Fred Jacklin, Malaspina University-College, Greg Link, Malaspina University-College, Jean Karlinski, B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer, Val Karpinsky, B.C. Institute of Technology, Dennis Mayberry, University College of the Cariboo, Tracy McCaskill, Technical University of British Columbia, Scott MacInnis, Centre for Education Information Standards and Services, Arlene Paton, Ministry of Advanced Education, John Patterson, Kwantlen University College, Ray Pillar, University College of the Cariboo, Kate Ross, Camosun College, Alanna Schlatter, Ministry of Advanced Education, Richard Spencer, University of British Columbia, Walter Wattamaniuk, Simon Fraser University

During the course of this contract, I was an independent consultant working not only with BCCAT, but also on contracts with the provincial government, another system agency and individual universities, university colleges, colleges and institutes. In addition, I had previously worked for thirteen years with the Ministry of Advanced Education and had been a Director responsible for various clusters of colleges, university colleges, institutes and universities. As I wrote the first draft of this report, I had accepted a position with the University Presidents' Council and I have done subsequent editing of the report since taking up that position in January of 2001. I have no doubt that my cumulative experiences with the post-secondary system have ingrained certain perspectives, but I have tried to remain objective during the course of this project.